

ISAAC CUMMINGS AND SARAH JONES CUMMINGS



Isaac Cummings was born May 31, 1837, in Gibson County, Tenn., son of John and Rachel Canarda. Married Sarah Jones (born May 31, 1842, at Pennsville, Morgan County, Ohio, daughter of Elisha and Margaret Talbot Jones. Died Dec. 7, 1897, at Heber) April 4, 1860, in Provo. Died April 7, 1906, at Heber.

Isaac (Babe) Cummings was the third child of John and Rachel Canarda Cummings. He was born May 31, 1837, in Gibson County, Tennessee. When he was 15 years old (1852), he came with his parents across the plains to Utah. In 1859 he was among the first settlers in Heber Valley.

Isaac helped haul the cornerstone for the first permanent meetinghouse in Provo. He was one of 40 men sent to intercept Johnston's Army in 1857. He was in the Walker and Black Hawk Indian War.

When 23 years old, he married Sarah Jones, eighth child of Elisha and Margaret Talbot Jones. She was born May 31, 1842, at Pennsville, Morgan County, Ohio, and had come with her parents to Utah in 1850, in the Mather Caldwell company.

Sarah and Isaac were married April 4,

BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS

1860, in Provo, by Jonathan Duke, at Robert Duke's home. They made their home in Provo a short time and then returned to Heber, where they built a home—humble indeed, with a dirt floor and dirt roof. It was located at First West and Third North Sts. The house, remodeled, still stands today and is owned by Jay Jacobson.

As their family increased so did their material means. After 10 children were born to them, they moved to a home on Main Street at Second South, where the library now stands. Here two more children were born.

Their children were: Isaac Jr., Elisha, Rachel, Margaret, John, Elizabeth, William, Thomas, Joseph, Hyrum, Francis and Luella.

In 1867, with four small children, they went to Salt Lake and were sealed in the Endowment House.

Sarah Cummings, like many of her day, learned to shear sheep, wash and cord wool, spin into cloth and make the cloth into clothes. She did sewing for others besides her own family, and helped make burial clothes and did much tailoring, mainly men's suits. In the early years of her marriage she spent many hours gleaning in the wheat fields.

As times became better she was encouraged by her husband to take provisions to less fortunate families. They were especially kind to families whose fathers were on missions.

Throughout her life she was an active member in the Church. In 1892 she was chosen first counselor to Anna R. Duke in the Stake YWMIA. On June 12, 1895, she was chosen president of Heber West Ward Relief Society, and on September 23, 1895, she took the place of Mary Daybell as second counselor to Emma Brown in the Stake Relief Society.

The later years of her life were marked by a prolonged illness. Before her death, December 7, 1897, she had been confined to her bed 18 months. She was 55 years old.

Babe Cummings was bowed down in grief. He had been a good husband and now he was left with six unmarried children, the youngest just eight years old.

For eight years he managed to care for his children, with the help of married daughters and "hired girls." He died April 7, 1906, at the age of 68.

Her scalp was cut and peeled back from just above the eyes back to just above the ears. This being such a severe wound, Sarah had to remain in the hospital. It was not known for weeks whether she would recover from the injury. Dr. Karl Nielson, the family doctor from Heber, by chance was at the hospital when Sarah was admitted. He performed the necessary surgery and also treated her when she was released and returned to Heber.

In 1952, once again Sarah had a narrow escape with her life. This time, a severe stroke disabled her. Dr. Nielson had given her from six to twenty-four hours to live and suggested to the family members present that they notify the other members of the family of her condition. Once again, Sarah became well enough to care for her husband and home. She often stated that it was through the prayers of administering elders and the family that she remained alive.

If medals were given out to people for love, kindness, and devotion, Sarah E. Giles Murdoch would have accumulated many. The kindness and love she showed to all she met, both young and old, and the devotion she had for her church, husband, and family was exemplary. She nursed and waited on her husband for many years, often having to bathe and dress him. She had to tie his shoes each time he put them on, as he had arthritis in his hands and could not do it for himself. Often Sarah remarked to her family that she hoped and prayed she could remain on earth long enough to see James put to rest and given a proper burial. This was accomplished, as her husband, James, preceded her in death. Sarah passed away August 2, 1961, and was buried beside her husband August 5, 1961, in the Heber Cemetery.

Written by Grant B. Murdoch,
with contributions from other
members of the family May 1980.



James C. and Sarah E. Giles Murdoch home prior to 1973

*James Crawford Murdoch
Lumber Home*